

Needle Exchange Funding Rally & Press Conference

Where & When:

Thursday, 25 April

City Hall

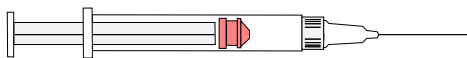
5:30pm

Why:

Study after study has proven needle exchange to be an effective prevention technique in slowing the spread of HIV. Furthermore, Milwaukee is at a crucial point—currently, only 3% of the intravenous drug using (IDU) population is estimated to be HIV-positive (a very low percentage compared to other cities in the Midwest. In Chicago, for example, 25% of the IDU population is estimated to be HIV-positive). With appropriate funding for exchanges and education, we can keep seroprevalance in the IDU community at its current low level, and even effect a reduction. Plus, spending money now on prevention is cheaper than spending money later on medical care.

To date, only private funds have been available to the LifePoint project. With a budget of \$100,000 the project is reaching approximately one-third of IDUs in the city of Milwaukee. With an additional \$100,000 in funds, it is projected the LifePoint project could expand its services sufficiently to reach the remaining two-thirds of the Milwaukee IDU population.

ACT UP Milwaukee demands that the City provide \$100,000 in matching funds in the 1997 budget.



Get the point?

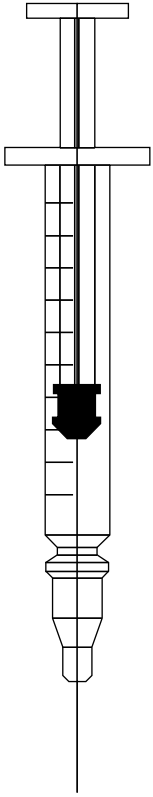
ACT UP

AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power

PO Box 1707 Milwaukee WI 53201-1707 • VOX: 414.226.2095 • FAX: 414.226.2095

City of Milwaukee Must Fund Needle Exchange Now

Study after study has proven needle exchange to be an effective prevention technique in slowing the spread of HIV. Milwaukee is at a critical juncture—currently, only 3% of the injection drug using (IDU) population is estimated to be HIV-positive. (A very low percentage compared to other cities in the Midwest. In Chicago, for example, 25% of the IDU population is estimated to be HIV-positive.) With appropriate funding for needle exchange and education, we can keep seroprevalance in the IDU community in Milwaukee at its current low level, and even effect a reduction. Besides preventing the spread of HIV through an exchange program where dirty syringes are exchanged for clean ones on a one-for-one basis, needle exchange programs also distribute bleach kits, cookers, condoms, and other educational materials as well as provide information and referral for alcohol and drug counseling and treatment.



LIFEPOINT, a service of the Milwaukee AIDS Project, is the only needle exchange program in the city. To date, only private funds have been available to the project. With a current budget of \$100,000, LIFEPOINT is reaching approximately one-third of IDUs in the city of Milwaukee. In its first year of operation, LIFEPOINT exchanged 75,000 syringes and helped 90 IV drug users get into treatment. With an additional \$100,000 in funds, it is projected that LIFEPOINT could expand its services sufficiently to reach the remaining two-thirds of the Milwaukee IDU population.

ACT UP Milwaukee demands that the City of Milwaukee provide \$100,000 in matching funds to LIFEPOINT in the 1997 budget.

The Centers for Disease Control has endorsed needle exchanges, as has the American Nurses Association, the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, The Foundation for Drug Policy, and the American Foundation for AIDS Research.

Needle exchanges are cost-effective. Mathematical models predict that over five years, needle exchanges could prevent many HIV infections among clients, their sex partners, and offspring, at a cost of about \$9,400 per infection averted. This is far below the \$119,000 (and rising) lifetime cost of treating an HIV-infected person.

What You Can Do

- Write or call the Mayor and tell him the City of Milwaukee needs to provide matching funds for needle exchange: Mayor Norquist, City Hall, 200 E. Wells, Milwaukee, WI 53202; 286-2200. **In your communication, mention that in 1995 Cleveland Mayor Michael White announced city grants totaling \$100,000 in needle exchange grants, declaring a health emergency in what he termed an alarming incidence of HIV infection among drug users. “The gravity of this emergency compels us to take extreme action in the face of the AIDS epidemic,” White continued in an official statement. We can expect no less from Mayor Norquist.**
- Join ACT UP Milwaukee. We meet the 2nd and 4th Monday of every month, 7pm, 820 N Plankinton Ave.

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Needle Exchange Funding Demonstration

ACT UP Milwaukee invites all participants in the **1996 Needle Exchange Conference** to join us in the first '96 action of our Needle Exchange Working Group. On Thursday, 25 April, we will be holding a rally/press conference outside of City Hall to demand that the City fund the LifePoint needle exchange project in Milwaukee.

To date, only private funds have been available to the LifePoint project. With a budget of \$100,000 the project is reaching approximately one-third of injection drug users (IDUs) in the city of Milwaukee. With an additional \$100,000 in funds, it is projected the LifePoint project could expand its services sufficiently to reach the remaining two-thirds of the IDU population in Milwaukee.

ACT UP Milwaukee demands that the City provide \$100,000 in matching funds in the 1997 budget. Study after study has proven needle exchange to be an effective prevention technique in slowing the spread of HIV. Furthermore, Milwaukee is at a crucial point—currently, only 3% of the IDU population is estimated to be HIV-positive (a very low percentage compared to other cities in the Midwest. In Chicago, for example, 25% of the IDU population is estimated to be HIV-positive). With appropriate funding for exchanges and education, we can keep seroprevalance in the IDU community at its current low level, and even effect a reduction.

If you and/or other participants of the Needle Exchange Conference would like to help support us, we would love to have you present. We have arranged for transportation from The Grand Milwaukee Hotel to City Hall and back. We are also willing to drop people off at restaurants or other locations on our way back to the hotel. The schedule is as follows:

Thursday, 25 April

- 5:00pm ACT UP procured buses will be outside The Grand Milwaukee Hotel to pick up interested parties.
- 5:30 We arrive downtown at City Hall; demonstration begins.
- 6:30pm We load up the buses and return to the hotel, making stops at restaurants/bars/pubs along the way if people wish.

Important note: The Milwaukee AIDS Project will be providing shuttle service throughout the Conference evenings. Thus, you do not have to worry about return transportation to the Hotel if you choose to eat in the Walker's Point area (where the shuttles will service) after the demonstration.

We would appreciate RSVPs of rough numbers from your agency/group who are interested in participating so we can ensure we have enough room on the buses. Please contact Yuri Keegstra with your RSVP.

Yuri at home: vox: 414.226.2095 / fax: 414.226.2095

Yuri at work: vox (direct): 414.225.1563 / fax: 414.273.2437 (attn: Yuri)

Hope to hear from you!

The AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power is a diverse group of individuals united in anger and compassion, and radically committed to direct action to end the AIDS crisis.

ACT UP Milwaukee • PO Box 1707 Milwaukee WI 53201-1707

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23 April 1996

For Immediate Release
Contact: Yuri Keegstra – 414.226.2095

ACT UP Milwaukee Demands Municipal Funds for Needle Exchange

ACT UP Milwaukee will hold a rally/press conference demanding municipal funding for needle exchange outside City Hall on Thursday, 25 April, at 5:30pm.

Study after study has proven needle exchange to be an effective prevention technique in slowing the spread of HIV. Milwaukee is at a critical juncture—currently, only 3% of the injection drug using (IDU) population is estimated to be HIV-positive. (A very low percentage compared to other cities in the Midwest. In Chicago, for example, 25% of the IDU population is estimated to be HIV-positive.) With appropriate funding for needle exchange and education, we can keep seroprevalance in the IDU community in Milwaukee at its current low level, and even effect a reduction. Besides preventing the spread of HIV through an exchange program where dirty syringes are exchanged for clean ones on a one-for-one basis, needle exchange programs also distribute bleach kits, cookers, condoms, and other educational materials as well as provide information and referral for alcohol and drug counseling and treatment.

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Other Midwest cities have municipally funded needle exchange programs. For example, the mayor of Cleveland declared a health emergency in 1995 and released \$100,000 in grants to fund needle exchanges and education programs. Should we expect less in Milwaukee?

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25 April 1996

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Needle Exchange Facts

- Approximately one-third of all AIDS cases occur among injection drug users (IDUs), their sex partners, and their children.
- A half of all AIDS cases among African Americans and Latinos are linked to dirty needle use.
- 64% of all AIDS cases in women are due to injection drug use or sex with partners who inject drugs.
- Injection drug use is the source of infection for more than half of all children born with HIV.
- In a study in New Haven, Connecticut, researchers found a 33% reduction in the rate of new HIV cases originating from dirty needles after a needle exchange program was instituted. A review of the modeling literature by a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-sponsored research team suggested this estimate may even be low.
- In a program in Tacoma, Washington, researchers found an eightfold drop among drug users of hepatitis, a blood-borne disease that was measured as a marker for HIV infection.
- The CDC has called for the repeal of state laws impeding needle exchange. The CDC researchers said “the preponderance of evidence indicates that needle exchange programs diminish HIV transmission without increasing drug use”.
- A study of a San Francisco needle exchange program that opened in 1988 found that from 1987 to 1992, frequency of injecting drugs among street-recruited IDUs declined from 1.9 to 0.7 injections per day. The mean age of IDUs increased from 36 to 42 years, and the percentage of new or younger users did not increase in the presence of the exchange; in fact, the exchange may have helped *decrease* the amount of drug abuse in the area.
- Needle exchanges also act as a bridge to drug treatment, can provide referrals, and actual services for HIV testing and counseling.

Failure to support ready access to sterile needles is medical malpractice.

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